UNITED
NATIONS

Framework Convention on
Climate Change

Distr.
GENERAL

FCCC/SBSTA/1995/2
3 August 1995

Original: ENGLISH

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC
AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
First session
Geneva, 28-30 August 1995
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK

Note by the secretariat

1. The Conference of the Parties at its first session (COP 1) adopted a decision on the roles of the subsidiary bodies which included provision for the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to consider a work plan at its first session (FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1, decision 6/CP.1, annex III). In this context, and with a view to facilitating the work of the SBSTA, the secretariat has prepared a proposed programme of work which is annexed to this note. Although the Chairman and officers of the SBSTA have been consulted on the content of the annex, the proposals remain the responsibility of the secretariat.

2. The proposed programme of work is based on the provisions of the Convention, especially Article 9, and the decisions adopted at COP 1. It is built around a series of substantive matters that the SBSTA is called upon to address. The programme covers the period up to COP 3, encompassing an anticipated six sessions of the SBSTA.

3. The SBSTA is invited to consider the proposed programme of work and to adopt, at its first session, an agreed work programme to guide its deliberations in the period up to COP 3.

4. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) will also consider a proposed programme of work at its first session. The secretariat has taken care in preparing the two proposed programmes of work to ensure their complementarity. In order to avoid duplication and overlap in the work of the two bodies, the proposed programmes of work include some suggested orientations or areas of emphasis for each of the subsidiary bodies. These suggestions are offered in an attempt to optimize the work of the Convention institutions. The SBSTA may wish to give careful consideration to the work programme elements relating to those issues for which it and the SBI share responsibility. In this respect, the proposed programme of work should be read in conjunction with decision 6/CP.1 and a background note by the secretariat on the division of labour between the subsidiary bodies established by the Convention (FCCC/SB/1995/Inf.1).

Annex

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE (SBSTA): PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK

I. GENERAL ORIENTATION

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), in its decision 6/CP.1 recalling Article 9 of the Convention, characterized the role of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) as being the link between the scientific, technical and technological assessments and the information provided by competent international bodies, and the policy-oriented needs of the Conference of the Parties. Decision 6/CP.1 also provides guidance on the functions and tasks of the SBSTA, its reporting to the COP, and the schedule of its meetings.

2. Other COP 1 decisions also relevant to the work programme of the SBSTA are as follows:

- Decision 2/CP.1 on the review of first communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention and decision 3/CP.1 on the preparation and submission of national communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention. With respect to the latter decision, the understanding reflected in paragraph 47 of the report of COP 1 (FCCC/CP/1995/7) would have to be taken into account;

- Decision 4/CP.1 on methodological issues (including the allocation and control of international bunker fuels);

- Decision 5/CP.1 on activities implemented jointly under the pilot phase;

- Decision 8/CP.1 on communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention;

- Decision 13/CP.1 on transfer of technology;

A. Schedule of sessions

3. The work programme of the SBSTA will have to be carried out in the context of a schedule of meetings. The SBSTA is invited to confirm the following schedule as proposed by the Bureau of the COP:

SBSTA 1: 28-30 August 1995, Geneva

SBSTA 2: During the week 26 February - 1 March 1996, Geneva

SBSTA 3: During the week 8-12 July 1996 (if COP 2 is held in October 1996)

SBSTA 4: Immediately preceding COP 2 (place and date to be decided)

SBSTA 5: During the week 3-7 March 1997

SBSTA 6: Immediately preceding COP 3

4. Further, a workshop on non-governmental inputs is envisaged for January 1996 (decision 6/CP.1, annex III). The timing of such a workshop is yet to be determined.

5. In addition, should the SBSTA decide on the establishment of intergovernmental technical advisory panels to provide advice on technologies, including advice on related economic aspects, and on methodologies (decision 6/CP.1, annex II, para. 5), provision would have to be made for meetings of such panels.

B. Schedule of work

6. The secretariat, following consultations with the Chairman and officers of the SBSTA, will prepare a tentative schedule of work for the sessions of the SBSTA up to COP 3, indicating which might be the principal items for consideration at each session. This schedule will be made available for consideration at the first session.

II. ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK

A. Scientific assessments

Product or task

7. The COP has requested the SBSTA to provide assessments of the state of scientific knowledge relating to climate change and its effects.

Mandate

8. The SBSTA will provide such advice pursuant to Article 9 of the Convention and decision 6/CP.1, annex I, paragraphs A1 and A5, on the roles of the subsidiary bodies.

Activities

9. In carrying out this task, the SBSTA will draw largely on the work of existing competent international bodies. The Second Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will be published in December 1995. The SBSTA is required to summarize and, where necessary, convert the latest international scientific,

technical, socio-economic and other information provided by competent bodies including, inter alia, the IPCC, into forms appropriate to the needs of the COP. This information will also be of use to the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGBM) and the SBI. The SBSTA may wish to schedule a first discussion at its second session, on the basis of a document prepared by the secretariat, with a view to finalizing a report at a later session for submission to COP 2.

B. Communications from Annex I Parties

(a) Review of national communications

Product or task

10. The SBSTA will provide advice to the COP on the basis of its consideration of the information communicated under Article 12 of the Convention. Such advice will focus on the scientific and technical aspects of the national communications, the in-depth review reports, and any compilation and synthesis of national communications.

Mandate

11. The SBSTA will provide such advice pursuant to Article 9 of the Convention and decisions 2/CP.1 and 3/CP.1 on communications from Annex I Parties, decision 4/CP.1 on methodologies and decision 6/CP.1, annex I, paragraphs A2 and A5, on the roles of the subsidiary bodies.

Activities

12. The review of communications from Annex I Parties will be a standard item on the agenda of the SBSTA. The SBSTA will oversee the process for in-depth reviews and for the preparation of any compilation and synthesis of communications. Further tasks in support of the review are:

- To consider the scientific and technical aspects of national communications and in-depth review reports;

- To develop guidelines for the content of national communications to enhance the comparability and focus of further communications;

- To promote and guide the development and refinement of methodologies, including the issue of statistical adjustments.

13. Summaries of available in-depth reviews will be submitted to the SBSTA at its second and future sessions. Copies of full in-depth reviews will be made available in the original language only. The SBSTA may wish to request the secretariat to prepare a first draft synthesis report for consideration by the SBSTA (and the SBI) at its second session with a view to finalization of the report at a later session for transmission to COP 2 (and the SBI).

(b) Assessment of policies and measures

14. Within the context of its consideration of scientific and technical aspects of national communications, assessment of the effectiveness of policies and measures taken by Parties would be of use to the SBI for its overall assessments of implementation and may be needed as an input to the work of the AGBM. It will also serve to identify those measures on which information should be exchanged among members.

(c) Development of guidelines for the preparation of national communications

Product or task

15. The SBSTA will report to the COP on the guidelines for the preparation of national communications of Annex I countries.

Mandate

16. Decision 4/CP.1 on methodological issues requests the secretariat, drawing upon the experience in the compilation and synthesis of national communications, to prepare a report on the guidelines for the preparation of first communications by Annex I Parties for consideration by the SBSTA and the SBI before the second session of the COP, with a view, among other things, to further enhancing the comparability and focus of communications.

Activities

17. The report, together with information received from other competent international bodies, including the IPCC, will be considered by the SBSTA at its second session and finalized at a later session for transmission to COP 2.

18. At COP 1, several countries with economies in transition drew attention to difficulties being experienced in applying the present guidelines because of scarcity of resources and the non-availability of adequate data (FCCC/CP/1995/7, para. 47). These difficulties were particularly relevant to paragraph 2 of decision 3/CP.1 on the preparation and submission of national communication from the Parties included in Annex I to the Convention. The SBSTA is invited to consider appropriate adjustments to the guidelines and procedures for future national communications.

(d) Methodologies

Product or task

19. The SBSTA will develop proposals for new or improved methodologies to be used in national communications.

Mandate

20. Decision 6/CP.1, annex I, paragraph A5, on the roles of the subsidiary bodies requests the SBSTA, inter alia, to undertake the tasks on methodological questions as specified in decision 4/CP.1 on methodological issues. Decision 6/CP.1 also authorizes the SBSTA, in accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure, to establish, subject to confirmation at COP 2, intergovernmental technical advisory panels, one of which would provide the SBSTA with advice on methodologies.

Activities

21. Proposals for changes or refinements in methodologies will derive, inter alia, from the in-depth review reports and from competent international bodies including the IPCC. The SBSTA may wish to consider this matter at its second session with a view to formulating recommendations at a later session for submission to COP 2.

22. In the event that the SBSTA sets up an intergovernmental technical advisory panel, some proposals concerning its establishment, together with suggested terms of reference, are given in the appendix to this note.

C. First communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

Product or task

23. The SBSTA and the SBI will provide advice to the COP on matters relating to communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

Mandate

24. The SBSTA will provide such advice pursuant to Article 9 of the Convention and decision 8/CP.1 on communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

Activities

25. Decision 8/CP.1 requests Parties to submit their views on first communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention. These views will be available to the SBSTA. The SBSTA could take up briefly at its first session, and more substantively at its

second session, the issue of developing recommendations/proposals on guidelines for the preparation of communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, taking into account Article 12.1 of the Convention.

26. Liaison with the SBI will be important and the views of the SBI should be sought in developing the guidelines. The SBI would focus on the process for consideration of the communications.

27. The SBSTA may wish to request the secretariat, drawing upon available inputs, to develop proposals for consideration at its second session. A report including proposals for guidelines for the preparation of communications could be finalized at a later session for submission to COP 2.

D. Activities implemented jointly under the pilot phase

Product or task

28. The SBSTA, in coordination with the SBI, will prepare a framework for reporting by Parties on activities implemented jointly under the pilot phase. The SBSTA, with the SBI and the assistance of the secretariat, will prepare a synthesis report on the information communicated by Parties relating to activities implemented jointly.

Mandate

29. The SBSTA will carry out its tasks in accordance with decision 5/CP.1 on activities implemented jointly under the pilot phase.

Activities

30. The views of Parties on activities implemented jointly have been requested and will be available to sessions of the SBSTA. The SBSTA should take the lead in preparing a framework for reporting and request the initial advice of the SBI at its first session. Substantive work could be carried out at the second and future sessions with a view to submission of proposals to COP 2. The SBSTA may wish to request the secretariat, drawing upon available information, to prepare a document for consideration at its second session.

31. On the assumption that reports on activities implemented jointly would be available from Parties after COP 2, scientific and technical issues relating to a synthesis report would be taken up at subsequent sessions before submission of a report to COP 3.

E. Transfer of technology

Product or task

32. The SBSTA and the SBI will advise the COP on issues related to the transfer of technology. The SBSTA is requested to advise on such matters as identification, assessment and development of technologies, the preparation and updating of inventories of technologies and the promotion of technology transfer. The SBI is requested to advise on the transfer of technology and the implementation of Article 4.5 of the Convention.

Mandate

33. The SBSTA will carry out its tasks pursuant to Article 9 of the Convention and in accordance with the provisions of decisions 6/CP.1, annex I, paragraph A3, on the roles of the subsidiary bodies and decision 13/CP.1 on transfer of technology.

Activities

34. The SBSTA is requested to focus on issues relating to technology identification, assessment and development. It is also required to review documents to be prepared on an itemized progress report on concrete measures by Parties listed in Annex II to the Convention, with respect to their commitments related to the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and on an inventory and assessment of environmentally sound economically viable technologies and know-how conducive to mitigating and adapting to climate change, and advise the secretariat accordingly.

35. It is expected that the SBI will focus on issues relating to transfer of technology and implementation of related commitments. It would also consider aspects of the inventory of technology relating to terms of transfer. The SBSTA could refer such matters contained in the progress report and the inventory and assessment report to the SBI.

36. The SBSTA should also advise the secretariat on scientific and technical aspects accordingly.

37. Decision 6/CP.1, assigns a number of responsibilities to the SBSTA in the field of technologies and authorizes the establishment of an intergovernmental technical advisory panel to provide it with advice on technologies, including advice on related economic aspects. In the event that the SBSTA sets up such a Panel some proposals concerning its establishment together with suggested terms of reference are given in Appendix I to this note.

F. Allocation and control of international bunker fuels

Product or task

38. The SBSTA will provide advice to COP on the allocation and control of emissions from international bunker fuels.

Mandate

39. The SBSTA will provide such advice pursuant to decisions 4/CP.1 on methodological issues and 6/CP.1 (annex I, para. A5) on the roles of the subsidiary bodies.

Activities

40. Decision 4/CP.1 requires the SBSTA and the SBI to address the issue of the allocation and control of emissions from international bunker fuels. The SBSTA should investigate the technical aspects of the allocation and control as well as other relevant information and advise COP (and the SBI) accordingly. In its consideration of this matter the SBSTA will take fully into account the ongoing work in governments and international organizations including the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization.

G. Possible contributions to the Berlin Mandate process, if requested

Product or task

41. The AGBM may possibly request advice or support with respect to the process established by decision 1/CP.1 on the Berlin Mandate.

Mandate

42. The SBSTA will respond to any request by the AGBM for advice or support pursuant to Article 9.2(e) of the Convention and in accordance with decision 1/CP.1 on the Berlin Mandate and decision 6/CP.1, annex I, paragraph A5 (c), on the roles of the subsidiary bodies.

Activity

43. The SBSTA will respond to scientific and technical questions referred to it by the AGBM.

H. Cooperation with competent international bodies

(a) General

Product or task

44. The SBSTA will cooperate with competent international bodies in relevant areas, including updating guidelines, methodologies, technologies and activities implemented jointly.

Mandate

45. The general mandate is to serve as a link between competent international bodies and the policy-oriented needs of the COP in areas related to methodological, technical and technological questions in accordance with decision 4/CP.1 on methodological issues, decision 5/CP.1 on activities implemented jointly, decision 6/CP.1, annex I, paragraphs A1, A3, A4 and A5, on the roles of the subsidiary bodies and decision 13/CP.1 on transfer of technology.

Activity

46. The SBSTA may give a mandate to its officers to develop proposals for future consideration.

(b) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Product or task

47. The officers of the SBSTA, as well as of the SBI, are invited to submit to COP 2, after due consultation with their respective bodies, proposals for future cooperation between the SBSTA and the SBI and the IPCC.

48. The IPCC has been identified as a main provider of scientific and technical assessments relevant to the validity and implementation of the Convention. Areas of mutual concern and the nature of information required from the IPCC by the SBSTA and the COP must be identified. In relation to this, the FCCC budget for the biennium 1996-1997 provides for a financial contribution to the IPCC work. An indication of the types of information expected from the IPCC, as well as a time-frame, would have to be established in consultation with the IPCC.

Mandate

49. The SBSTA will conduct its work in accordance with the provisions of decisions 4/CP.1 on methodologies and 6/CP.1, paragraph 6 and annex I, paragraphs A1 and A5 on the roles of the subsidiary bodies.

Activity

50. On the question of future cooperation, and in the light of a preliminary discussion, the SBSTA may give a mandate to its officers to provide input to the IPCC Plenary session in December 1995 and to develop proposals with the IPCC (and the SBI), for consideration at a future session of the SBSTA with a view to finalizing proposals for submission to COP 2.

I. Proposals or longer-term arrangements and organizational matters

Product or task

51. The SBSTA is to develop proposals on its longer-term activities and organizational arrangements, including any adjustments to the functions and/or allocation of work, and the scheduling and periodicity of sessions; these proposals are to be reported to COP 2.

Mandate

52. The SBSTA will perform this task on the basis of the request in decision 6/CP.1, paragraph 5.

Activity

53. The SBSTA may wish to have an initial discussion on these matters at its second session, on the basis of a document prepared by the secretariat, with a view to finalizing proposals at a later session for submission to COP 2.

J. Workshop on non-governmental inputs

Product or task

54. The schedule of events for the SBSTA indicates for January 1996 a workshop on non-governmental inputs open to all Parties and interested non-governmental participants which "should discuss the need for, and possible scope, structure, membership and work plans of, non-governmental advisory committees and/or a business consultative mechanism" and report to COP 2.

Mandate

55. The mandate for holding such a workshop in the context of the SBSTA is included in the footnote to the schedule of events for the subsidiary bodies (decision 6/CP.1, annex III).

Activity

56. The SBSTA could address such issues as the responsibility for organizing the workshop, its substantive content (for example, to discuss the creation of a business consultative mechanism, or of several non-governmental advisory committees, or both), sources of funding, participation and which participants should be funded, its timing, its end result (for example, a report to the SBSTA), and whether or how such a mechanism (or such committees) would relate to the intergovernmental technical advisory panels.

III. OTHER MATTERS

57. The SBSTA is also requested to report on its work to COP 2. It will have to adopt, at its fourth session, a series of reports, decisions and/or recommendations relating to the various items on its work programme. To the extent that additional information needs to be passed to the COP, this may be done through a report from the Chairman.

58. The programme of work will need to retain sufficient flexibility to allow the SBSTA to undertake additional activities, if requested by the COP or by the AGBM.

Appendix

INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANELS ON TECHNOLOGIES (TAP-T) AND METHODOLOGIES (TAP-M)

1. The COP at its first session, in its decision 6/CP.1, authorized the SBSTA, in accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure, to establish, subject to confirmation at the second session of the COP, two intergovernmental technical advisory panels to provide it with advice on technologies, including advice on related economic aspects, and on methodologies.

2. Some suggestions regarding the establishment of these panels, including proposed terms of reference, are given below.

Membership

3. It is proposed that members be individual experts, drawn from nominees by Parties. Members of the panels, including the Chairmen, will be selected by the Chairman of the SBSTA from the list of nominees received, taking into account the need for representation of different fields of competence and geographical regions. The number of members of each panel could be restricted to about 15.

Terms of office

4. Each member would serve for a fixed term, say three years, and would be eligible for reappointment after that time.

Number and duration of meetings

5. In principle, the panels would meet twice between sessions of the COP for durations of perhaps two to three days each.

Funding

6. Funding for participation would be offered to experts from eligible countries in accordance with the same criteria governing funding of participation from the Special Voluntary Fund and subject to the availability of funds.

Terms of reference

Intergovernmental technical advisory panel on technologies (TAP-T)

7. The Intergovernmental Technical Advisory Panel on Technologies will provide advice to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice on technologies including

advice on related economic aspects. The panel would also provide advice, as appropriate, through the SBSTA, on matters regarding the SBI.

8. In particular, the panel will identify innovative, efficient and state-of-the-art technologies and know-how and advise on the ways and means of promoting development and/or of transferring such technologies (Article 9.2(c)). In this context, the panel will:

(a) Develop proposals for the collection and dissemination of information on appropriate technologies for limiting emissions from sources, enhancing sinks of greenhouse gases and adapting to climate change, and on related international initiatives, cooperation and programmes, and the services they offer;

(b) Provide advice on the latest, and future, technologies mentioned above, their effects, their relative feasibility in different circumstances and their relevance to programme priorities of the financial mechanism, taking into account relevant advice to the COP from the SBI;

(c) Provide advice on ideas on promoting international initiatives, programmes and cooperation in the areas of technology development and transfer, as well as on sharing of experience between Parties;

(d) Evaluate ongoing efforts in the area of development and/or transfer of technologies to determine whether they fully meet the needs of the Convention, and advise on possible improvements.

Intergovernmental technical advisory panel on methodologies (TAP-M)

9. The intergovernmental technical advisory panel on methodologies will provide advice to the SBSTA on methodologies.

10. In particular, the panel may:

(a) Consider statistical adjustments used in national communications;

(b) Seek, in particular from the IPCC, and provide advice on, the development, improvement and refinement of comparable methodologies for:

(i) National inventories of emissions and removals of greenhouse gases;

(ii) Projecting national emissions and removals of greenhouse gases and comparison of respective contributions of different gases to climate change;

(iii) Evaluating the individual and aggregated effects of measures undertaken pursuant to the provisions of the Convention;

(iv) Conducting impact/sensitivity analyses;

(v) Assessing adaptation responses;

(c) Seek information and provide advice on methodological questions in support of the guidance to be provided by the Conference of the Parties to the financial mechanism, and guidelines in the application of the concept of "agreed full incremental cost";

(d) Provide information and advice on any methodology and technical aspects that would be needed in the development of protocols to the Convention;

(e) Provide guidance and advice on the use of agreed methodologies;

(f) Provide guidance on technical aspects of issues related to the implementation of the Convention, such as the allocation and control of emissions from international bunker fuels or the use of global warming potentials.